

James Craine Bronaugh to Andrew Jackson, February 16, 1822, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

DR. JAMES C. BRONAUGH TO JACKSON.

Washington, February 16, 1822.

. . . . Yesterday the 3rd no. of the documents were laid upon the tables of the members. It contains Fromentins correspondence with the Secy. of State and the Secy,s reply. That you will be astonished at the course of the President I have no doubt, as I know that you have entertained a good opinion of him, but his conduct in this affair must satisfy you that not the least confidence is to be placed in his professions of friendship, that he is a base infamous hypocrite. it consigns him in my estimation to ever lasting infamy. Let us for a moment take a review of his conduct—the Secy. of State lays before him Fromentins letters from the 20th of August to the 21St of Sept. in those letters the most billings-gate abuse is lavished upon that man, for whom he has expressed always the most friendly regard, to whom he is indebted for his present elevation and who has rendered his country much more important services than any man now living.

What course under those circumstances would a high minded honorable man have pursued. he would have dismissed him from office without a moments delay and directed the Secy. of State to inform that he considered him a corrupt scoundrel. But what course did the President pursue? He continued him in Office. in his message to Congress he spoke of him in the same manner that he did of [the] man who had rendered such important services to his country and directed his Secy of State to inform him that altho' his view was different from that taken by Fromentin yet "that he was persuaded that his motives and intentions were entirely pure". I dont know when my feelings have been

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as much excited as upon taken a view of the whole conduct of the President upon this subject. The time is not distant when he shall be made to feel, if indeed he has any feelings the dishonorable course which he has pursued in relation to this business. For the present I hope you will take no notice of him—let the decision be made by Congress. you will then have it in your power to make such an appeal to the American people as will satisfy them how much confidence ought to be reposed in the President or his Secy. of the Treasury, by whos[e] advice I am induced to believe he acted on this occasion. I understand that Mr Adams was decidedly of opinion that the only notice that ought to have been taken of Fromentins communications was “that he was no longer to consider himself a Judge of the U. States”. That the President can justify his conduct, is I am satisfied, impossible and the more I consider of it, the more disgraceful it strikes me. . . .